

*Thucydides: The Peloponnesian War, Book II.* By J.S. RUSTEN, ed. New York, NY: Cambridge Univ. Press, 1989. Pp. x and 261. Cloth, \$44.50; paper, \$18.95.

Anyone attempting to read Thucydides requires help. The text is difficult linguistically, structurally, and historiographically. J.S. Rusten has assumed the daunting task of explicating Book II, particularly its "linguistic texture." The result is a highly successful commentary of great value to readers approaching Thucydides' text for the first or the twenty-first time.

The volume contains an intelligent and readable introduction that treats Thucydides' life, historiographical tendencies, and stylistic idiosyncrasies; a text, printed with only a brief critical apparatus in the appendix; and a full commentary with helpful maps.

The commentary is simply superb. Rusten understands Thucydides' Greek and offers just the right advice, particularly on syntax, to even advanced readers. Troubling phrases are translated and analyzed accurately and clearly, not emended or explained away. He judiciously derives meaning from form, generally paying full respect to context. He also evinces excellent literary taste, especially in his interpretations of Pericles' most notorious *sententiae* (see esp. pp. 164-68 on 2.42.4 and pp. 175-78 on 2.45.2).

Teachers will find this commentary invaluable. Indeed, we can now feel confident enough to confront advanced undergraduates with this enormously problematic, but ultimately most rewarding of compositions.

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*Classical Sparta: Techniques behind Her Success.* By ANTON POWELL, ed. Foreword Paul Cartledge. Norman, OK: Univ. of Oklahoma Press, 1988. Pp. xiv and 196. Cloth. \$32.50.

This edited work includes, besides Cartledge's foreword, seven articles on subjects rarely associated with the standard treatment of Sparta: laughter, drink, inheritance, propaganda, religion, and mendacity. Inheritance is linked with marriage and demography in an interesting attempt to deny the traditionally accepted *kleros* system supposedly devised by Lycurgus, and mendacity is coupled with Sparta's use of the visual. There is also an article which questions Kleomenes' madness.

Since there are so few primary sources for Sparta, each author uses the same material to state his case, thus reinforcing not only the reader's knowledge of the sources, but also the arguments in the previous articles. The authors are all well-known scholars in the field of Spartan history.

This is an interesting book with an interesting concept. The articles are well-written and shed new light on old and neglected material. This book should be a valuable source for both high-school and college teachers who want to show the austere, automaton-like Spartans in a more human form.

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## INDEX TO THE CLASSICAL OUTLOOK, VOLUME 67

### ARTICLES

Dee, James, "Latin Doubles: A Sampler," 3-4.  
 Dickison, Sheila D., "The Grading of the 1988 Advanced Placement Examination in Latin," 5-12.  
 Eichenseer, C., "Radiophonicae Regulares Emissiones Latinae Finnorum," 75.  
 Hamilton, Richard, "A Different Kind of Magnet Program," 1-2.  
 Heisey, Daniel, "Tacitus and . . . Our 17-Year-Olds," 37-38.  
 LaFleur, Richard A., "Empowering the Teacher of Latin: Rockefeller Fellowships and the Classical Languages," 116-19.  
 Michels, Agnes K., "Roman Festivals—April-June," 76-77; "Roman Festivals—July-September," 114-16.  
 Moskalew, Walter, "Fetial Rituals and the Rhetoric of the Just War," 105-10.  
 Sebastiani, Lee Ann, "Historical Fantasy for Latin Students," 78-75.  
 Stephens, Stephani, "Latin and the Learning Disabled Student," 111-13.  
 Traupman, John C., "Joe Paterno's *Aeneid*," 110.

### EXCERPTA

Anderson, John D., "Latin Lives on . . . ad Infinitum," 78-79.  
 Donohue, John, "Unforgettable Maureen O'Donnell," 120-22.  
 Galinsky, Karl, "The Romans Also Had a Thing about . . . Thing," 79.  
 Harward, V. Judson, "From Museum to Monitor: The Visual Exploration of the Ancient World," 42-48.

### POETRY

Barth, R.L., "Thomas Campion 2.26: Martial and Catullus," 15; "Thomas Campion 2.80: On Barnes," 15; "From the Fables of Phaedrus," 15-16.  
 Cunningham, David R., "Ex Machina Homo," 52.  
 Fike, Francis, "Helen, Off Troy," 81; "Galatea," 81-82.

Freeman, James A., "Philostratos: Love Letters," 16.  
 Fuller, Roy, "Somewhere in Socrates," 124.  
 Hunt, P.N., "Pleiades," 82.  
 Huxley, Herbert H., "Lines from a Whispering Gallery," 126.  
 Jinadeva, "From across the Bay," 82.  
 Jobe, Carey, "Versions from Claudian," 51-52.  
 Johnson, Van L., "The Restless American," 125; "Bustling Neighbors," 125; "The Pompous Husband," 125.  
 Knight, John Cantey, "Penelope's Song," 51.  
 Litsey, Sarah, "In Italy: Rome," 124.  
 McNamee, Gregory, "Callimachus at Pharos," 51.  
 Morgan, Diane, "The Watchman," 80; "The Riddle," 80.  
 Murgatroyd, Paul, "Lyce," 51; "Chione," 51.  
 Noguere, Suzanne, "Atomologies," 50.  
 O'Connor, Eugene, "Tiresias," 50.  
 Riggs, Dionis Coffin, "Sapphics on Greek Isles," 124.  
 Slavitt, David R., "Ovid, *Epistulae ex Ponto* 1.9: To Maximus," 14.  
 Tusiani, Joseph, "Ad Flaviam," 125.  
 Wender, Dorothea S., "Life and Dragons," 125.  
 Wilson, Joyce, "The Archer," 50.  
 Wolff, Eleanor, "Catullus 38," 14.

### AUXILIA MAGISTRIS OBLATA

Huxley, Herbert H., "Two Thirds of a Loaf Is Better than No Bread," 26.

### REVIEWS

Anderson, William S., and Mary Purnell Frederick, *Selections from Ovid's Metamorphoses: Baucis and Philemon; Acis, Galatea, and Polypheus; Narcissus and Echo; Pentheus* (Charlayne Allan), 35-36.  
 Aronson, Andrew C., and Robert Boughner, *Catullus and Horace: Selections from Their Lyric Poetry* (Charlayne Allan), 35-36.  
 Barnes, E.J., and John T. Ramsey, *Cicero and Sallust: On the Conspiracy of Catiline* (Charlayne Allan), 35-36.

Beavis, I.C., ed., *Insects and Other Invertebrates in Classical Antiquity* (Liliane Bodson), 32.

Bell, Patricia E., ed., *Amor et Amicitia: A Collection of Latin Poems, Letters, and Epitaphs with Vocabulary, Notes, and Questions* (Richard Hamilton), 99, 101.

Bell, Patricia E., ed., *Imperium et Civitas: A Collection of Latin Passages Selected from History, Poetry, Speeches, and Letters with Vocabulary, Notes, and Questions* (Richard Hamilton), 99, 101.

Branham, R. Bracht, *Unruly Eloquence: Lucian and the Comedy of Tradition* (Barry Baldwin), 96.

Cunliffe, Barry, *Greeks, Romans and Barbarians: Spheres of Interaction* (James C. Anderson, Jr.), 67.

Davies, Malcolm, and Jeyarane Kathirithamby, eds., *Greek Insects* (Liliane Bodson), 32.

Davis, Sally, and Gilbert Lawall, *Cicero's Somnium Scipionis: The Dream of Scipio* (Charlayne Allan), 35-36.

Dimock, George E., *The Unity of the Odyssey* (W. W. de Grummond), 134.

Gentili, Bruno, *Poetry and Its Public in Ancient Greece: From Homer to the Fifth Century* (Kenneth J. Reckford), 66.

Greene, David, and Wendy Doniger O'Flaherty, trans., *The Oresteia by Aeschylus: A New Translation for the Theater* (Theodore A. Tarkow), 136.

Hall, Jane Harriman, and Alexander G. McKay, *Selections from Vergil's Aeneid Books I, IV, VI: Dido and Aeneas* (Charlayne Allan), 35-36.

Halleran, Michael R., *The Heracles of Euripides* (Philip Holt), 96.

Henderson, Jeffrey, ed. and trans., *Aristophanes' Lysistrata* (Philip Holt), 96.

Johnston, Patricia A., *Traditio: An Introduction to the Latin Language and Its Influence* (Gregory A. Staley), 98.

Lawall, Gilbert, ed., *Teacher's Handbook to the Longman Latin Readers* (Charlayne Allan), 35-36.

Lawall, Gilbert, and Bettye Nye Quinn, *The Aulularia of Plautus: The Pot of Gold* (Charlayne Allan), 35-36.

Leach, Eleanor Winsor, *The Rhetoric of Space: Literary and Artistic Representations of Landscape in Republican and Augustan Rome* (Alexander G. McKay), 97-98.

Maas, Martha, and Jane McIntosh Snyder, *Stringed Instruments of Ancient Greece* (Jon Solomon), 66-67.

Moles, J.L., ed. and trans., *Plutarch: Lives, Cicero* (William C. West), 136-37.

Ostwald, Martin, *Anangkē in Thucydides* (Hunter R. Rawlings III), 136.

Parke, H.W., *Sibyls and Sibylline Prophecy in Classical Antiquity* (Agnes K. Michels), 137.

Powell, Jim, *It Was Fever That Made the World* (David Middleton), 69-70.

Richardson, L., jr., *Pompeii: An Architectural History* (Robert I. Curtis), 97.

Saggs, H.W.F., *Civilization before Greece and Rome* (Jeffrey L. Boller), 134.

Samuel, Alan E., *The Promise of the West: The Greek World, Rome and Judaism* (Louis H. Feldman), 32-33.

Sansone, David, ed. and trans., *Plutarch: Lives, Aristeides and Cato* (William C. West), 136-37.

Stambaugh, John E., *The Ancient Roman City* (James C. Anderson, Jr.), 34-35.

Thomas, Richard E., ed., *Virgil: Georgics* (Michael C.J. Putnam), 33.

Thornton, M.K. and R.L., *Julio-Claudian Building Programs: A Quantitative Study in Political Management* (L. Richardson, Jr.), 96-97.

Traupman, John C., *Latin Is Fun: Book I* (Lynne McClendon), 98-99.

Veyne, Paul, *Roman Erotic Elegy: Love, Poetry, and the West* (John Rauk), 33-34.

Whalen, Paul, ed., *Multas per Gentes: A Collection of Latin Passages Selected from History, Prose, and Poetry* (Richard Hamilton), 99, 101.

Whalen, Paul, ed., *Urbs Antiqua: A Collection of Latin Passages Selected from History, Poetry, Speeches, Inscriptions, and Letters with Vocabulary, Notes, and Questions* (Richard Hamilton), 99, 101.

Wood, Neal, *Cicero's Social and Political Thought* (John Nicholson), 137-38.

## NOTES

Boyle, A.J., ed. and trans., *Seneca's Phaedra: Introduction, Text, Translation and Notes* (Gilbert Lawall), 70-71.

Bushnell, Rebecca W., *Prophesying Tragedy: Sign and Voice in Sophocles' Theban Plays* (Philip Holt), 138.

Eichenseer, C., *Dialogi Latini de Rebus Recentioribus* (cassette tape); *Latinitas Viva: Libellus textualis* (A.P. Dobsevage), 101.

Frier, Bruce W., *A Casebook on the Roman Law of Delict* (Alan Watson), 101.

Gillespie, Stuart, *The Poets on the Classics: An Anthology of English Poets' Writings on the Classical Poets and Dramatists from Chaucer to the Present* (Meyer Reinhold), 36.

Groton, Anne H., and James M. May, *Thirty-Eight Latin Stories* (R.A.L.), 71.

Johnston, David, *The Roman Law of Trusts* (Alan Watson), 70.

Keay, S.J., *Roman Spain* (Alexander G. McKay), 101.

Lawall, Gilbert, and Sarah Lawall, eds., *Euripides: Hippolytus—A Companion with Translation* (Peter Burian), 70.

Mattusch, Carol C., *Greek Bronze Statuary: From the Beginnings through the Fifth Century B.C.* (Brunilde Sismondo Ridgway), 36.

Place, Robin, *The Romans—Fact and Fiction: Adventures in Roman Britain* (Cynthia Klas), 71.

Podlecki, A.J., ed. and trans., *Aeschylus: Eumenides* (Thomas G. Rosenmeyer), 138.

Powell, Anton, ed., *Classical Sparta: Techniques Behind Her Success* (Linda J. Piper), 139.

Rusten, J.S., ed., *Thucydides: The Peloponnesian War, Book II* (Hunter R. Rawlings III), 139.

Segal, Charles, *Orpheus: The Myth of the Poet* (David Sansone), 138.

Shotton, D.C.A., ed. and trans., *Tacitus: Annals IV* (Herbert W. Benario), 71.

Sommerstein, Alan H., ed. and trans., *Aristophanes' Peace* (Kenneth J. Reckford), 36.

Tester, S.J., ed., *Fides Quaerens Intellectum: Medieval Philosophy from Augustine to Ockham* (Marvin L. Colker), 101.

## FEATURES

The 1988-89 ACL Report: A Summary (Cynthia King), 39-41.

Books and Materials Received, 36, 71-72, 104, 122.

The Clearing House (Kenneth F. Kitchell, Jr.), 18-20, 54-56, 84-86, 128-30.

Facetiae, 31, 66, 92, 126.

Random Access (Rob Latousek), 22-23, 88-90.

Quid Novi?, 23-25, 59-60, 91-92, 122.

Teaching Materials and Resource Center (John A. Dutra), 28-29, 64-65, 94-95, 132-33.



